



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**For Immediate Release**

January 26, 2007

**JURY FINDS BREVARD COUNTY CONVICTED FELON GUILTY  
ON FEDERAL FIREARMS AND NARCOTICS CHARGES**

Orlando, Florida - A jury in U.S. District Court today found JOSEPH LEE HOLMES, JR., age 30, of Melbourne, Florida, guilty on a multiple count indictment charging him with conspiracy to distribute "crack" cocaine and cocaine hydrochloride; possession with the intent to distribute five grams or more of "crack" cocaine; possession with the intent to distribute cocaine hydrochloride; carrying / possessing a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime; and, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. HOLMES faces a minimum mandatory term of imprisonment of 20 years on the firearms counts; he likewise faces a minimum mandatory term of 10 years' imprisonment up to life imprisonment on the narcotics counts. Sentencing is scheduled for April 16, 2007, before the Honorable Gregory A. Presnell, United States District Judge.

According to the evidence presented at trial, Holmes and a co-defendant, Jonathan Johnson, conspired to manufacture and sell "crack" cocaine and powder cocaine from a rented duplex at 2426 Stone Street, Melbourne in the beginning of 2006. On April 22,

2006, the City of Melbourne Police Department executed a search warrant at the duplex and discovered "crack" and powder cocaine intended for distribution, packaging materials, three loaded firearms, 118 rounds of ammunition, a video surveillance system, a digital scale and \$2,550 in United States Currency. Prior to trial, the co-defendant, Johnson, already pled guilty.

The case represents the culmination of a cooperative effort between the United States Attorney's Office, the State Attorney's Office for Brevard/Seminole Counties, the Brevard County Sheriff's Office, the City of Melbourne Police Department, the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA") and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"). This is another case prosecuted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative with strong support from ATF. United States Attorney Paul I. Perez is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials. In Brevard County, State Attorney Norm Wolfinger is calling the initiative "Operation Cease Fire." The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert E. Bodnar, Jr., and Special Assistant United States Attorney Craig S. Forrester of the Brevard County State Attorney's Office.